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**Dear Child Care Professional,**

I am very pleased to present you with this child care guidebook.

As you are well aware, increasing numbers of young children are being cared for outside of their homes while their parents work or go to school. The availability of quality child care is critical to the well being of children, families, communities and businesses.

You, as child care providers, are key to making sure that children thrive in child care settings.

This guidebook is being published in two versions: home-based child care and center-based child care.

Based upon a recommendation from the Department of Social and Health Services' Child Care Licensing Redesign Committee, this guidebook is intended to serve as a comprehensive resource for both providers and licensors.

This guidebook explains the licensing process and suggests some ideas on how to get through that process easier. The guidebook also has many suggestions on how to operate a quality child care program. Some you may already be aware of, some may be helpful new tips.

The jobs you do are vitally important to the children and families of this state and I appreciate your commitment. I hope you will find this guidebook useful in operating your child care business.

*Sincerely*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lyle Quasim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lyle" being more prominent and the last name "Quasim" following in a similar style.

**Lyle Quasim  
Secretary  
Department of Social  
and Health Services**

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# The Child Care Center Licensing Guidebook

Welcome to the community of people involved with child care centers in our state.

The guidebook that you have just opened represents months of work by child care center providers, licensors, and child care professionals. It is an interpretation of current rules, presented with lots of ideas, suggestions and examples that you may want to use. Please do!

The guidebook was written for you and others like you who are interested in providing quality center care for children. Consider it as a reference tool and your licensor as a consultant. Both are available to help you at no cost.

Keep in mind that the current child care center Washington Administrative Code (WAC) accentuates the positive. It focuses on “shoulds” rather than “shouldn’ts.” Following in the same vein, the guidebook describes positive living and learning environments for children.

Welcome to the world of child care centers. This is **your** guidebook.

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Most importantly, the children enrolled in child care centers and  
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